



Arlington Tree Committee (ATC)

Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, May 8, 2024

Time: 6:30 - 8:00 PM

Location: [ATC Monthly Meeting Zoom Link](#)

ATTENDING:

Members: Olivier Aries, Mary Ellen Aronow, Eliza Burden, Steve Moore, Keith Schnebly, Susan Stamps, Mara Vatz.

Guests: Sara Alfaro-Franco (ConComm Rep), Jackie Anderson (ATC candidate in-process), Annika Ziegler
(Arlington High School Student Liaison)

Tree Warden: Tim Lecuivre

Agenda:

1. Call to Order / Meeting Norms -- Meeting started early and was shortened to allow for five ATC members who are also Town Meeting Members to attend Annual Town Meeting at 8:00 PM.
2. Review Agenda, Introduce Guests -- Three guests, as noted above.
3. Status of Action Items from Previous Month -- Reviewed Action Items and updated in real-time, online.
4. Discussion and Approval of Minutes from Previous Month -- Deferred to June meeting, to allow time for other agenda items.
5. Department of Public Works (DPW) Tree Division Update (Tim)
 - a. Tree Preservation Bylaw Activity
 - i. 114-116 Varnum St. near Thorndike Field -- no trees on site, so no planned removal. Tim explained process; the Tree Bylaw was triggered by recent Bylaw changes (roof removal now included) and it was the first time for this contractor. Tree Plan submitted by Marquis; public shade tree in front of property will be protected.
 - ii. Others are in-process -- Inspectional Services has fully implemented its digital, automated system, ensuring that Tree Plans are submitted properly before subsequent steps can occur. Tim is notified electronically when a Tree Plan is submitted.
 - b. Tree Hearings -- no Tree Hearings scheduled.
 - c. Town Projects & Maintenance Activities -- MBTA project to rebuild Bus Stop near Mass. Ave. and Boulevard St. Large Siberian elms are near the location and may be impacted; Town team and MBTA will meet at the site. Arlington Town Seal depicts gateway elms at this location; the Siberian elms may have been replacements for the Seal's old American elms. The good news is that Tim is being involved in the discussions

- i. Questions about Tree Warden role in MBTA and/or state projects. Tree Warden's current role is to provide facts about tree health (per M.G.L. Chp. 87), not opinions.
 - 1. With DOT and Town projects, decision-making authority is with Select Board and/or MBTA.
 - 2. ATC can do advocacy if desired -- value of shading bus stop for instance, and/or saving tree canopy.
- d. Other -- ten trees to be planted in Mount Pleasant Cemetery. Tim's vision is to have the Cemetery become more of an arboretum.

6. Community Tree Canopy Program (CTCP)

- a. Arbor Day Delivery -- 70 trees ordered; 57 delivered to residents in just over four hours. 63 currently sold, overall; there are seven white oaks still available. Tim will look into the planting options on Town sites.
 - i. **Action: Tim to review spots suitable for planting remaining oak trees (three white oaks have been planted at the Water Tower location. One oak planted at 201 Spring St., on the median strip).**
 - ii. **Action: Mary Ellen to bring money to Town for deposit.**
 - iii. **Action: Mary Ellen to get Purchase Order for New England Nurseries -- Nelson Mao (new Assistant DPW Director) can help Mary Ellen with this.**
- b. Subcommittee Update -- they met by Zoom on May 6. Ready to start pursuing back of sidewalk locations; every Subcommittee member has the printed materials for approaching owners of potential sites
 - i. The Arlington CTCP was mentioned on the Channel 25 News during the Arbor Day week.
 - ii. Subcommittee met earlier this week
 - 1. **Action: Olivier coming up with FAQs for incorporation into materials.**
 - 2. Need to get home owners to sign off on liability before planting can happen. We need to have the Town Counsel review and approve our waiver before using it.
Action: Get updated liability and care document to Town Counsel for review.
 - iii. Eliza has had encouraging contact with management company reps from 840 Mass. Ave. (site across from High School); Eliza and Tim met at site, and determined that the site could accommodate several large trees. **Action: Eliza has draft notes; she will confer with Tim and then correspond with property owners.**
 - iv. **Action: Steve has his list of apartment properties from three+ years ago that he will share with the Subcommittee. Susan can focus on apartment complexes in East Arlington.**
 - v. Mary Ellen suggested to use the ATC new member packet material to focus on public streets and heat islands for identifying back-of-sidewalk locations.
 - vi. Steve has been pursuing Saint Camilla's for potential locations; unfortunately, there may be a development project at the site at some point in the near future, so tree planting is not a priority currently at this site.
 - vii. There was discussion about possibly creating an additional door hanger for back-of-sidewalk. In the meantime, we will use the current DPW door hangers, or use the ATC postcard mailer (with a written personal note on it to the property owner).
 - viii. Mary Ellen noted that per the notice on our ATC site, we are receiving email requests from folks interested in back-of-sidewalk planting on their properties. Mary Ellen has posted a Excel sheet on Dropbox; Eliza has updated with almost a dozen locations. Marina also has many sites identified. **Action: Mary Ellen to send link to ATC members for**

logging identifying properties that might be candidates for back-of-sidewalk tree planting.

7. Adopt-a-Tree Program (AATP)

- a. Program is in progress -- a first-day glitch with newly-planted trees not showing as available on the AATP Tree Map. Steve worked with Susan Brunton to remediate, and adoptions are proceeding
 - i. There are up to 750 trees available for adoption, the 150 planted this spring plus the 300 per year the prior two years.
 - ii. Annika is helping with signups. Steve thanked her for her part; her video reel was also released.
 - iii. Annika presented an update on her activities promoting the AATP at the High School. There are constraints around PR sign posting, which she is working through. There will be an EcoFest at the High School May 14, where she will be also promoting the AATP. Outside visitors are not encouraged to participate at the EcoFest table, but are definitely welcome to attend the event!
- b. QR code stickers for AATP were placed on some of this Spring's new street trees materials.
- c. Eliza suggested perhaps another way may be easier; can possibly deploy additional door hangers near newly-planted trees.
- d. During discussion Tim mentioned the policy about people who refuse Street Trees in front of their homes. He places a "No plant" icon on map. **Action: Follow up with Tim about how long the "no plant" icon stays in place.**
- e. Gator Bags are available. Tim can supply but these, but are not currently easily accessible. Tim suggested putting a box near the front lobby in DPW. **Action: Keith to follow up with Tim about placing bags in the DPW lobby.**

8. Publicity & Events

- a. 2024 Annual Town Meeting -- Susan will present the ATC update based on the report in the 2023 Annual Report. She will also try to find Precinct Coordinators for AATP among the Town Meeting Members.
- b. Heights Street Event May 18 -- Susan and Keith committed to 2:00 - 5:00 PM at our table under the Bus Stop Canopy. Others are welcome!
- c. Your Arlington News Feature -- Marina -- **next month's agenda.**
- d. Street Banners -- may be a little pricey; about \$110 apiece. Eliza mentioned we should follow up on Canva site to get an alternative cost estimate.
- e. Minuteman High School Biology Teacher Request -- **next month's agenda.**
- f. Girl Scout Troop Request -- **next month's agenda.**
- g. Laura India Garinois (MIT Architecture student) Presentation Mar 15 at 4:00 PM -- Keith will attend.

9. ATC Outreach to Town Departments / Boards / Committees / Commissions -- not discussed.

10. New Business

a. Reforestation Act -- **next month's agenda.**

11. Review New Action Items -- not discussed.

12. Adjourned -- 7:50 PM.

Next Meeting: June 12, 2024 at 7:30 PM.